



Town of North Andover Quarterly Newsletter

JANUARY 2008 Issue 6

News from the School Department — V. James Marini, Superintendent of Schools

This is a particularly busy time of year for everyone, and the schools in North Andover are buzzing with activities in preparation for the holiday season. The plays, concerts and general excitement this season brings make being in school a wonderful experience for teachers as well as students. And while our focus and energy may be on holidays, there are still a few important matters that I need to bring to your attention.

John McAleer, a long-time principal in North Andover, will be retiring at the end of this school year. Mr. McAleer is a highly respected educator who has served as principal of the Sargent, Atkinson, and Thomson schools during his time in North Andover. Mr. McAleer has served with distinction, and we will certainly miss his high energy and positive spirit next year. Currently, a search committee made up of parents, staff, and administrators is being formed to screen candidates and help select the next principal for the Thomson School. Selecting a new principal is one of the most important responsibilities a superintendent has. I very much appreciate the willingness of the Thomson teachers and parents to give of their time and expertise to assist in this important task.

North Andover High School, like most New England high schools, is accredited by The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Generally, schools are accredited on a ten-year cycle. This year North Andover is under going the accrediting process. Last year, the school engaged in a year-long self-study in preparation for an on-site visit by a NEASC team. The team completed its visit of North Andover High School last month. During the three-day visit, the team observed classes, interviewed students, parents, teachers, administrators, and members of the School Committee. The team will report on such things as the facilities,

the academic program, standards, breadth of program, administrative and community support, school climate, and the stated mission of the school. Prior to the arrival of the visiting team, North Andover High School was removed from "Warning" status. This was done in recognition of the added support the high school received through the override. We expect to receive a comprehensive report of the visiting team's findings by late winter.

We are anticipating the purchase of a town-wide notification system which will be used to provide all school families with important information. Through the wonders of technology, the school department will have the capability to contact all parents/guardians by phone within a few minutes of placing a single call. The system will allow us to communicate no-school announcements through personal calls, as well as other important notices. Beyond these notices, the system allows for general parent communication and for surveys to be conducted. We are confident this new tool will enhance our communication with parents.

The community provided substantial support for the realization of a new elementary science program this year. This fall elementary teachers received several training sessions for the inquiry-based program which were facilitated by teacher leaders and program consultants. Phase one Physical Science Units are now being implemented, and student work will be analyzed during the January in-service day. We look forward to sharing results with the community. This initiative is only one of many that are focused on instituting a K-12 standards-based education system that will be discussed further during the year.

From all of us in the schools, we wish you a joyous and safe holiday season.

News from the Town Clerk's Office

The Massachusetts Presidential Primary date has been changed from March 4, 2008 to February 5, 2008. We ask your help in assuring that you will be able to make your appropriate choice for this very important election. It is critical that you be a registered voter and be certain of your party affiliation for this election. You must be registered to vote by Wednesday January 16, 2008 to be eligible. If you are a registered "Democrat" you must take a Democratic ballot. If you are a registered "Republican" you must take a Republican ballot. "Unenrolled voters" (No party affiliation) may take a Democratic, Republican, Green-Rainbow, or Working Families ballots. Any changes in party affiliation must be done by 8:00PM on January 16, 2008 to be in effect for this election. All registered voters will vote at the North Andover High School. If you are concerned about the weather or your ability to be

able to get to the polls on February 5, please request an absentee ballot. Forms are available or a simple note to the Town Clerk's Office is sufficient to have a ballot mailed to you. Please be certain to include the Party ballot you want sent and contact information where you can be reached.

Please call the Town Clerk's Office at (978)688-9501 if you wish to verify voting status, party affiliation, need an absentee ballot, or have any questions. You can also send an e-mail to jbradshaw@townofnorthandover.com for assistance.

Please look for and respond to your 2008 Annual Town Census forms in early January. Election information for all of 2008 will be included in the census mailing. Thank-you for all your support and assistance.

News from the Police Department

In response to numerous requests, the Police Department has begun an aggressive campaign to help clear town sidewalks of illegally parked vehicles. The sidewalks are intended for pedestrian use and in some locations residents have adopted the town sidewalks for parking vehicles year round.

The winter parking is not intended to allow parking on the sidewalks. Parking on sidewalks or otherwise blocking them is illegal all year. No snow or other debris should be deposited on town sidewalks.

The objective is not to fine people but to alter the behavior and bring people into compliance. To that end, the Police Department and other town officials have made efforts to warn residents prior to issuing any violations. A warning was published in the newspaper with the winter parking ban notice, the subject was discussed in open session at Board of Selectmen meetings in November and December, printed warnings were

put on vehicles in violation in early December and it has been advertised on the cable channel. In some cases residents received recorded phone messages from the Police Department advising them of the regulations.

If you have not been made aware of this enforcement effort please discontinue the practice of parking on the sidewalks, parking in the wrong direction, parking too close to intersections and fire hydrants and parking in restricted areas. If you have a tenant or neighbor who may be in violation please help us by making them aware. In addition, property owners are asked to clear snow from their sidewalks so pedestrians are not forced to walk in roadways.

Our goal is to keep the sidewalks as safe as possible for pedestrians. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

News from the Fire Department

Firefighters David Pas and Ryan Titcomb recently graduated from the Massachusetts Fire Academy's 177th Recruit Firefighter Class. Both Dave and Ryan participated in 11 weeks of intense training at the Stow facility including rescue of victims over ground ladders, auto extrication and fire attack among many other firefighting disciplines. Firefighters Pas and

Titcomb are both certified as EMT-Bs and are assigned to Unit 2 with Dave working out of Station 2 on Salem St and Ryan working out of Station 1 on Main St. Congratulations to both members on their accomplishment and we wish them good luck as they move forward in their careers.

News from the Building Department

The Building Department encourages homeowners, property owners and contractors in North Andover to check out the "Safety Tip" icon on the Building Department section of the Town website to be better informed about consumer safety issues. Go to www.townofnorthandover.com, click on "Town Departments", then click on "Building Department". Your local inspectors believe that applying the latest information

about safe building, electrical, gas and plumbing practices will help reduce unnecessary losses and will create well informed consumers.

Additional information is available by visiting the Building Department web page as well as other Community Development departments.

News from the Division of Public Works

LAKE COCHICHEWICK OUTLET STRUCTURE AND DAM PROJECT

The Town of North Andover has awarded a contract for improvements to the Lake Cochichewick Outlet Structure and Dam to Waterline Industries Corporation of Seabrook, New Hampshire. The bid price for the project is \$376,676.00.

The dam is located at the westerly point of the southern tip of Lake Cochichewick and has a drainage area of approximately 5.5 square miles. The dam was constructed in 1837 and was used as part of the Stevens Mill complex. A railroad embankment was subsequently installed which masked the original configuration and geometry of the dam. The dam has an approximate height of 12 feet and has an estimated maximum storage of about 2,400 acre-feet or 783 million gallons. The existing regulating outlet for the dam is a hand operated timber gate with a rack and pinion gear which allows the gate to be lifted and lowered by lever action. The gate is approximately 5 feet wide and 4 feet high and is housed in a cut-stone structure built into the lake shoreline. An underground stone conduit 150 feet in length allows Lake Cochichewick to discharge into Stevens Pond.

Lake Cochichewick has been the source of the town's

drinking water since 1898. In the first full year of water department operation in 1899 a total of 17,650,500 gallons of water was pumped into the town's water distribution system. A total of 1,005 million gallons was pumped from Lake Cochichewick in 2006. Work on the dam is essential to our water supply to reduce the risk of dam failure and further deterioration of the outlet structure.

The project involves maintenance of key components to the town's water supply. Maintenance of the dam includes repair of the dam with filter fabric, crushed stone, and rip-rap slope protection from below the normal water level to the crest of the embankment. The project also includes replacement of the existing wooded sluice gate, installation of a bar screen over the inlet of the outlet channel, and cleaning out of silt and debris buildup partially blocking the sluice gate and outlet channel. A temporary portable cofferdam system will be used to dewater an area in front of the outlet structure and at the outlet of the underground conduit into Stevens Pond to allow the in water construction to be accomplished in a "dry condition". Work on the project will began in mid September and is expected to be completed in January 2008.